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PATENT
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Remarks/ Arguments

In response to the Final Office Action mailed May 18, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the remaining rejections of the claims. Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of Claims 4, 9 – 19, and 28 - 30, and the allowability of Claims 3, 5 – 8, and 24 - 27 over the prior art.

Claims 1 - 30 remain.

Claims 1, 5 – 7, and 20 are being amended.

Claim 3 is being cancelled.

Claim 31 is being added.

Claims 4, 9 – 19 and 28 – 30 been allowed.

Claims 3, 5 – 8, and 24 – 27 stand objected – to.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Ver Nooy*. (U.S. Patent 3,360,284) (hereinafter "the *Ver Nooy* reference"). Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to include the limitations of former objected-to Claim 3, which has now been cancelled. Additionally, Claims 5 - 7 have been amended to remove the duplicate subject matter of Claim 3. Claims 1 – 8 should now be in condition for allowance.

Claims 20 and 22 – 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Clair et al.* (U.S. Patent 3,362,730) (hereinafter "the *Clair* reference"). Applicant has amended Claim 20 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that the retaining lip is disposed on the inner surface around the outlet aperture. This feature is not taught by the *Clair* reference.

Applicant has added Claim 31 which is directed to a tapping sleeve including first and second sleeve members, the first sleeve member having an outlet aperture and an outlet retaining lip disposed on an inner surface of the first sleeve member surrounding the outlet aperture. The feature of a first sleeve member having an outlet aperture

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having a retaining lip on an inner surface surrounding an outlet aperture is not taught by either the *Ver Nooy* or *Clair* references, taken either alone or in combination.

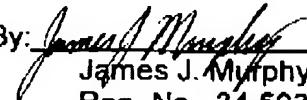
No new matter has been added; the claims have been merely amended to more particularly claim the subject matter Applicant believes is inventive. Applicant respectfully submits that the Claims as they now stand are patentably distinct over the art cited during the prosecution thereof.

With the addition of one new independent Claim, Applicant submits herewith Form SB – 17 with the required additional claim fee. Additionally, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number 20-0821 of Thompson & Knight LLP.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments concerning this paper or the present application in general, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (214) 969-1749.

Respectfully submitted,

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